



Movies With Spirit

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Kingston Area Council of Churches, Ministers' Alliance of Ulster County and Mid-Hudson Islamic Association
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2013–2014 Calendar

Sept. 21, THE CATS OF MIRIKITANI (2006), The Uptown Gallery, 298 Wall St., Kingston — Linda Hattendorf's award-winning documentary offers a poignant profile of 81-year-old Japanese-American painter Tsutomu Mirikitani, who lives on New York City's SoHo streets peddling his drawings, mostly of cats, but also of angry red flames. Hattendorf, who lives nearby, finds the art intriguing and develops a friendship with the man, delving into his life and learning about his U.S. internment during World War II. *"Makes you realize why the elderly are revered in some cultures"* — Newsday. Not rated.

Oct. 19, SHOUTING SECRETS (2011), St. John's Episcopal Church, 207 Albany Ave., Kingston — This heartwarming drama, which won 22 film-festival awards, is about a fractured family brought together in part by tragedy. Wesley (Chaske Spencer), a successful young novelist, left Arizona and the San Carlos Apache Reservation long ago. He remains close to his mother (Tantoo Cardinal) but alienated from the rest of his family after writing a best-selling "tell all" book family members find strikingly autobiographical at their expense. Wesley has no intention of returning home for his parents' 40th anniversary, but does when he learns his mother had a stroke. Once home, his family members come to realize Wesley's life isn't as charmed as they thought. And he learns profound truths about them and their struggles that repair bonds once thought irretrievably broken. *"An incredible performance."* — Waterfront (South Haven, Mich.) Film Festival. *"Leaves you inspired."* — Rhode Island International Film Festival. Not rated.

Nov. 16, ARRANGED (2007), Flowing Spirit Healing/Woodstock Sufi Center, 33 Mill Hill Road, Woodstock — Two young women — Rochel (Zoe Lister Jones) an Orthodox Jew and Nasira (Francis Benhamou) a Muslim of Syrian origin — meet and become friends as first-year teachers at a Brooklyn public school. They soon learn they share much more in common than they imagined, including feeling culturally out of place in 21st century New York and trying to live within their traditions while struggling with their feelings. The women also bond over the fact they're both expected to enter into arranged marriages, Nasira with a wary optimism and Rochel with a great deal of trepidation. *"A lovely little gem of a film, beautifully shot and perfectly cast."* — Filmmaker Magazine. Not rated.

Dec. 14, THE COLOR OF PARADISE (2000), Woodstock Jewish Congregation, 1682 Glasco Turnpike, Woodstock — **NOTE: Screening one week earlier than usual** — In this first Iranian film nominated for an Academy Award, Mohammed (Mohsen Ramezani), a spirited 8-year-old blind boy with a passion for learning and life, arrives home for the summer from his school for blind children in Tehran. He's loved by his little sisters and adored by his gentle grandmother but seen by his widowed, self-pitying father Hashem (Hossein Mahjoub) as a burden. Believing Mohammed will hinder his attempts to remarry into a prosperous family, Hashem is determined to foist him off onto a blind carpenter. *"A transcendent film, deeply committed and beautifully wrought. It will make anyone who sees it look at the world with new eyes."* — San Francisco Chronicle. Persian with English subtitles. Rated PG.

Jan. 18, BUCK (2011), Woodstock Reformed Church, 16 Tinker St., Woodstock — This richly textured and visually stunning documentary about the cowboy who inspired *The Horse Whisperer* book and film follows Buck Brannaman from his abusive childhood to his phenomenally successful approach to horses. Buck eschews the violence of his upbringing and teaches people to communicate with horses through leadership and sensitivity, not punishment. Buck possesses near-magical abilities as he dramatically transforms horses — and people — with his understanding, compassion and respect. Robert Redford, who played the character inspired by Buck in the 1998 *Horse Whisperer* film, appears in the documentary as himself. “*One of those rare documentaries whose subject is so inherently fascinating that a fictional character could hardly compete.*” — The Washington Post. *Rated PG.*

Feb. 15, RED LIKE THE SKY (ROSSO COME IL CIELO) (2006), Christ Episcopal Church, 20 Carroll St., Poughkeepsie — Cristiano Bortone’s heart-capturing film is inspired by the true early life of Mirco Mencacci, one of Italy’s most gifted sound editors. Blinded by a freak childhood accident in 1971, Mirco (Luca Capriotti) is sent to a school for the blind, as Italian law required at the time. Mirco isn’t willing to accept his disability as a handicap. When he finds an old tape recorder and a few used reels, he discovers that by cutting and splicing tape he can create little fairy tales made only of sounds, opening a new creative world to him. But the religious boarding school authorities oppose his “harboring of illusions” and forbid him to make more tapes. Undaunted, Mirco sneaks time with his tape recorder and slowly involves his classmates, who immediately love the new activity. One day the students slip out of school and go to the movies, a defiant act school administrators respond to with swift punishment — only to have their decision, and others, reversed in the students’ favor. “*An adventure of inspiration and creativity that will lift your hearts!*” — San Diego Italian Film Festival. *Italian with English subtitles. Not rated.*

March 15, OCEAN OF PEARLS (2008), Episcopal Church of the Messiah, 6436 Montgomery St., Rhinebeck — Amrit Singh (Omid Abtahi), a young Detroit Sikh surgeon whose parents emigrated to Toronto from India in the 1960s, senses his outward appearance could get in the way of professional opportunities. So he shuns his family and does the unimaginable for a Sikh — he forsakes his turban and cuts his long black hair. “Why would someone work so hard to come to a new world just to keep on living in the old one?” he asks. But shedding his religious convictions proves far more complicated than he imagines in this penetrating, semiautobiographical tale about bigotry and self-realization. The film, which won four film-festival awards, is directed by Sarab Singh Neelam, a Sikh gastroenterologist from Troy, Mich. “*That Neelam was a medical doctor before becoming a filmmaker gives his picture its exceptional impact and complexity.*” — Los Angeles Times. *Rated PG-13.*

April 12, SHUFFLE (2011), St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, 163 Main St., New Paltz— **NOTE: Screening one week earlier than usual** — Lovell Milo’s life is out of order — literally. Every day he wakes up at a different age, on a different day of his life, never knowing where, or when, he’s going to be. Lovell (T.J. Thyne) is terrified by this unending time warp, until he begins to notice a pattern in the chaos. What ensues is Lovell’s quest to unearth the truth behind his mind-bending experience. Part *Twilight Zone* and part *It’s a Wonderful Life*, *Shuffle* leads its audience through the maze that is Lovell’s life in search of sanity, harmony — and eventually answers. Winner of 11 film-festival awards, including the Fallbrook (Calif.) International Film Festival’s 2013 Frank Capra Award. “*Staggeringly well made.*” — Film Threat. *Rated PG-13.*

May 17, HILARY AND JACKIE (1998), Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church, 22 Livingston St., Kingston — This striking true story, based on the powerful biography *A Genius in the Family*, focuses on Hilary and Jacqueline du Pré, gifted sisters who grow up in England in the 1950s and compete for musical accolades and love. Hilary (Rachel Griffiths) is a talented flutist, but her younger cellist sister, Jackie (Emily Watson), is the musical “genius.” The film — first told from Hilary’s point of view and then from Jackie’s — follows their sibling rivalry in musical competition and romance. Though extremely close as children, they separate as Jackie becomes an international star and marries top pianist and conductor Daniel Barenboim (James Frain). Hilary marries her true love, conductor Christopher “Kiffer” Finzi (David Morrissey), and settles in a remote country farmhouse with their two children. But who is jealous of whom? “*An extraordinary film*” — Roger Ebert. *Rated R.*

June 21, LIFE OF PI (2012), Vivekananda Retreat, Ridgely, 101 Leggett Road, Stone Ridge — Director Ang Lee’s fantasy adventure drama based on Yann Martel’s novel of the same title revolves around a 16-year-old Tamil Indian boy named Piscine Molitor “Pi” Patel (Suraj Sharma), who survives a shipwreck and is hurtled into an epic 227-day journey while stranded in the Pacific Ocean on a lifeboat with another survivor, a fearsome Bengal tiger with whom he forms an unexpected connection. Winner of four Academy Awards. *“You don’t just watch this movie, you live it.”* — Rolling Stone. *Rated PG.*

July 19, THIRTEEN CONVERSATIONS ABOUT ONE THING (2001), Temple Emanuel, 243 Albany Ave., Kingston — Director Jill Sprecher spins this intricate ensemble film about people’s search for happiness. Set in New York City, the film focuses on five different characters with radically different perspectives on life. Gene (Alan Arkin) manages a large insurance company and is a compulsive pessimist, constantly bursting the bubbles of his more cheery colleagues. Walker (John Turturro), who holds a similarly bleak view of the world, decides he cannot stand another day in his dull life as a physics professor and promptly dumps his wife, Patricia (Amy Irving). Troy (Matthew McConaughey) is an up-and-coming lawyer whose career is derailed after a hit-and-run accident. And Beatrice (Clea DuVall) is a modest cleaning woman hoping for a miracle. *“Resonates with intelligence and poignancy.”* — Chicago Tribune. *Rated R.*

Aug. 16, TAKE ME HOME (2011), Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Catskills, 320 Sawkill Road, Kingston — In this romantic comedy about “the road less traveled,” Thom (Sam Jaeger) is broke and jobless, working as an illegal New York City medallion taxi driver to make some quick cash to try to pay his rent. At the same time, Claire (Amber Jaeger), a successful businesswoman, just learned her husband is flirting with his secretary and her estranged father suffered a heart attack in California. Not knowing what to do, she hails a cab — driven by Thom — and, distressed, orders him to “just drive.” She falls asleep and wakes up shocked to discover they’re in Pennsylvania. Thom reminds her she said, “Just drive.” Claire says she needs to go to California, and they decide to drive across country. They make more than a few detours along the way that force them to learn about themselves, each other, the lives they left behind and the possibilities glimpsed on their journey. Shot in 13 states. Winner of 11 film-festival awards. *“Touching, funny and refreshingly original.”* — Big Vision, Empty Wallet. *Rated PG-13.*

Each screening begins at 7 p.m. and is followed by refreshments and a facilitated discussion. Evenings end around 10 p.m. A \$5 contribution is suggested for moviegoers over age 12.

The series is organized by Gerry Harrington and has no religious affiliation.

For more information, contact Gerry at gerryharrington@mindspring.com or at (845) 389-9201. Film and series details are also available at movieswithspirit.com and at [facebook.com/MoviesWithSpirit](https://www.facebook.com/MoviesWithSpirit).

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